

**Delaware Commission for Women Meeting
Office of Women's Advancement & Advocacy
State of Delaware, Department of Human Resources**

Monday, March 25th, 2019

10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Carvel State Office Building
820 N. French Street, 4th Fl.
Wilmington, DE 19801
Department of State Arts Conference Room
(No Videoconferencing)

Members Present:

Marian Palley
Alisha Bryson
Sherese Brewington-Carr
Laura Burnett
Kat Caudle

Staff Present:

Melanie Ross Levin
Carling Ryan
Shaleah Sutton

DRAFT MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Marian Palley at 10:47 a.m.

Approval of minutes from January 28, 2019

Ms. Palley asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting (January 28th, 2019). Ms. Caudle made the motion, and Ms. Bryson seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously by members present.

The Chair's Introductory Comments

Ms. Palley noted that two pieces of legislation came before the legislature that would have required ultrasounds and outlawed abortion after 20 weeks. These bills were heard in the Senate Sunset Committee, and were not released from committee. She added that she and Ms. Ross Levin both testified, though Ms. Palley was not representing the Commission. She made observations about the support and opposition to the bill when it was heard before committee. She noted the importance of staying vigilant with regard to all women's issues. Ms. Brewington-Carr said that it would be helpful to have notes to inform Commission members about the issues before the Legislature, so that they can speak on these issues with one message.

Review of She's On Her Way

Ms. Palley shared that she thought the event was extremely successful. She asked Ms. Brewington-Carr for her observations. Ms. Brewington-Carr stated that the number of people who applied, and the diversity in the applications, was a strength. Several dignitaries attended, the location and décor was beautiful, and the staff and sub-committee did a good job. She encouraged all members of the commission to assist with these types of events.

Ms. Brewington-Carr noted that there was a perception that this happens annually, and that hadn't yet been decided. She asked that the sub-committee have an official meeting so that they could provide a formal briefing and decide if the event should be held annually.

Ms. Ross Levin stated that she collected some feedback, and overall it went really well. She stated that March is tricky because there was snow, and if the State offices closed, the event would have been closed. She suggested moving it towards the end of the month. The snow affected a few people's attendance. She added that it was also tricky with staff time in conjunction with legislative session. She said the location was lovely, but people do not work around the location, and since it was during the middle of the day, it took some time out of their work day. Ms. Palley suggested moving the event to later in the day.

Update on the Women's Coalition Speed Lobbying Day

Ms. Palley noted that nine advocacy groups and three legislators attended a "speed meeting" event, hosted by the Women's Coalition, a project of the Commission for Women. Ms. Ross Levin stated that many people loved the concept, but she suggested that legislators be afforded an opportunity to speak to all of the groups at once, and that food may have improved attendance. There was discussion about moving toward a more traditional lobbying day. Ms. Ross Levin suggested having it at Woodburn, the Governor's Mansion, and Ms. Caudle suggested holding it at Fraizer's, next to Legislative Hall.

Ms. Palley asked the group to consider how it should be set up next year to have more legislators attend. Ms. Ross Levin suggested holding it earlier in the year, in January. Ms. Palley stated that the speed meeting event would be discussed at the next Women's Coalition meeting.

Updates from the Office of Women's Advancement & Advocacy

Ms. Ross Levin shared that OWAA was launching 4 salary negotiation workshops in the spring. She added that there were also opportunities for people to attend and observe the workshops if they were interested in becoming trainers. She stated that there would be heavy snacks or light dinner and beverages, depending on the sponsors' preferences. Ms. Ross Levin also stated that there would be a pre/post survey of participants. There was a question around the cost to become a trainer. Commission members also suggested options for space to host the seminars in Sussex County and Wilmington.

Ms. Ross Levin stated that the Office is also working on launching the 2019 Hall of Fame of Delaware Women, and that sponsorship opportunities will be available this year.

OWAA is meeting with new legislators this year and is providing legislators with our report. The Office is also preparing for the launch of the paid parental leave law for the State. She added that DHR is finalizing policies for state employees.

Ms. Ross Levin mentioned several initiatives that she planned to embark on in the next fiscal year, including: re-upping divorce seminars, a policy discussion around women in trades, and updating our website. She added that she would be traveling to Washington, D.C. to gather more policy ideas to recommend for implementation in Delaware.

New Business

Ms. Ross Levin stated that the Centennial for Women's Suffrage subcommittee has been created as a subcommittee of the Delaware Heritage Commission. She stated that the Commission needed to consider how it wanted to be involved. She added that UD has been meeting about their plans for the centennial.

Public Comment and Final Thoughts

There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 p.m.